

EXAMINER'S AMENDMENT

An examiner's amendment to the record appears below. Should the changes and/or additions be unacceptable to applicant, an amendment may be filed as provided by 37 CFR 1.312. To ensure consideration of such an amendment, it MUST be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee.

Authorization for this examiner's amendment was given in a telephone interview with Lisa Swiszez Hazzard on September 8, 2009.

The application has been amended as follows:

The claims:

1. (Currently amended) A composite porous membrane comprising:
a hydrophobic substrate having an average pore size ranging from about 0.01 μm to about 10 μm coated with difunctional surface-modifying molecules;
each difunctional surface-modifying molecule comprising a hydrophobic portion preferentially associated with the substrate and a hydrophilic portion and having an active group containing a carbon-carbon double bond;
the difunctional surface-modifying molecules consisting of a difunctional acrylate monomer;
wherein the difunctional acrylate monomer comprises greater than about 90% of the molecules associated with the membrane;
wherein the substrate is coated by flowing a reagent solution through the substrate to coat the substrate surface and inner surfaces of the pores, the reagent solution consisting of the difunctional surface-modifying molecules, a

solvent, and a photoinitiator, wherein the reagent solution is capable of flowing through the substrate; and

wherein the surface-modifying molecules are crosslinked to form a crosslinked hydrophilic polymeric network at the substrate surface and inner surfaces of the pores of the membrane, and wherein the pore size of the coated membrane is substantially the same as the pore size of the porous membrane before coating.

53. (Currently Amended) The membrane according to claim 51 ~~or 52~~, wherein the reagent solution comprises less than about 0.5% difunctional surface-modifying molecule.

54. (Currently Amended) The membrane according to claim 51 ~~or 52~~, wherein the reagent solution comprises less than about 0.25% difunctional surface-modifying molecule.

55. (Currently Amended) The membrane according to claim 1 ~~or 50~~, wherein the flow rate through the pores of the coated membrane is substantially the same as the flow rate through the pores of the non-coated membrane.

59. (Currently Amended) The membrane of claim 1 ~~or 50~~ wherein the hydrophobic substrate has an average pore size of about 0.2 μm .

60. (Currently Amended) The membrane of claim 1 ~~or 50~~ wherein the hydrophobic substrate has an average pore size of about 0.45 μm .

Cancel claims 50, 52 and 58.

Reasons for Allowance

The following is an examiner's statement of reasons for allowance: Note that Applicant's amendment, the examiner's amendment are sufficient to overcome the claim objections, the 112 claim rejections, and the art rejections over Witham (US 6,193,077) and sufficient to place the instant claims in condition for allowance.

Witham discloses a coating solution that requires a polyethylene oxide polymer. The limitations that the reagent solution consists of difunctional surface-modifying molecules, a solvent and a photoinitiator wherein the difunctional surface-modifying molecules consist of a difunctional acrylate monomer are sufficient to exclude the polyethylene oxide polymer which a required component of the Witham coating solution. Accordingly, Witham is not qualified as prior art.

Conclusion

Any comments considered necessary by applicant must be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee and, to avoid processing delays, should preferably accompany the issue fee. Such submissions should be clearly labeled "Comments on Statement of Reasons for Allowance."

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Hai Vo whose telephone number is (571) 272-1485. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday through Thursday, from 9:00 to 6:00.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Callie Shosho can be reached on (571) 272-1123. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

/Hai Vo/
Primary Examiner, Art Unit 1794